

Fr. Perozich comments —

Cleric is a state of an office in the church which ascribes the bishop, priest, or deacon certain privileges and obligations to do the work of teaching, sanctifying, and guiding. With it comes privileges of belonging to a group whose authority manages the affairs of the church, of certain compensation depending on the particular office so that the cleric may do the work of the church without having to work in the world for food, shelter, clothing, and so forth.

If a cleric leaves ministry, is removed from ministry, he loses the clerical state with its spiritual and material privileges.

Clericalism is a term with a fluid meaning. Clericalism is a part of the church. It is good if the cleric lives in faith for his salvation and that of his people.

Clericalism becomes corrupt if the cleric lives more in the world of bureaucracy and his personal material privileges of power, possessions, and prestige.

In the past it wrongly has been used to arouse sentiment against traditional priests who rightly use the attire prescribed for them in canon law, be it the black outfit with collar and/or the cassock who teach the classic Catholic faith, who appreciate the instructions of reverent liturgy. Clericalism has been used wrongly to erase distinctions between priest and laity.

I guarantee you that no bishop, whether he wears a cassock and mozzetta or a simple black suit with a pectoral cross, would tolerate a priest who did not tow the particular bishop's line in expressing viewpoints with which that bishop did not agree. That bishop would not permit an erasure of the distinction of his authority to rule his diocese.

Fr. Longenecker, in his article below describes another clericalism, one where authority is over exercised by those in charge to shut down opposing view points, to attack faithful priests and laity who promote the classic architecture of the

church, the traditional dogmas and doctrines of morality, the liturgical reverence, and so forth.

Fr. L makes the distinction of the traditional cleric who promotes the truth of the church, knows his role and loves the laity while knowing his configuration to Jesus makes the priest both a father and shepherd to be with his children and flock, but also makes that priest not just one of the crowd.

The traditional cleric knows his role first is to meet Jesus in prayer for adoration, contrition, thanksgiving, supplication for himself and his people. He knows that he must be filled with the Holy Spirit and have his own spirit guided by Jesus in the Eucharist in order that the priest do this for his children and his flock. If this is clericalism, then clericalism is a good attribute

When clericalism becomes corrupt, it looks to the privileges of the office: power over others to push a new agenda, to control thought rather than to guide the mind to Jesus, to protect the institution above all things, to attack all who promote classic Catholic worship, prayer, architecture, catechesis, and so forth.

This corrupt clericalism silences those who disagree with it with overbearing orders on what to write, what to say, how to minister, among other things. It ignores classic dogma, doctrine, and seeks to modernize the church to the ideas of the world in order to increase its power and privilege.

It now has spread to church bureaucracies for those are not bishops, priests, or deacons with the permission of the bishops who run those dioceses, says Fr. L.

It speaks in worldly structures and bureaucracies rather than in matters of faith for the salvation of souls, concerned with property, money, politics all the time, control of thought and expression. Jesus is mentioned only to justify a particular effort.

So what's a Catholic to do?

Pray as you know. Teach the faith to your children and grandchildren in the classic way you learned it. Find a parish where liturgy is reverently celebrated and your soul is nourished

with Jesus, not the opinions of the clerics. Donate to those parishes, religious orders, and real Catholic movements that promote faith in Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sin and eternal life. Select the Benedict option, joining with other like minded people who believe our Catholic faith without all the bureaucracy.

Our local bishop in Hawaii is a faith filled man. The dioceses still have to have a bit of bureaucracy in order to make sure that their material assets are managed and for clergy to gather from time to time. When I arrived he asked me, “Do you go to the vicariate meetings?” I responded, “No bishop, those meetings are one of the reasons why I retired, too many people



talking about too many things that have nothing to do with faith, and which try to pull me into their worldly beliefs.”

Clericalism is a part of the church. I'll try to live on the good side of it.

Fr. Dwight Longenecker

LAYER UPON LAYER OF CLERICALISM

Fr Z has written [here](#) about the true clericalism in the church.

He points out that traditional Catholics are often accused of clericalism because the clergy dress in their cassocks, like wearing birettas and insist on the distinction between the clergy and laity because they are opposed to extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and lay leadership.

But Fr Z. claims that the liberals in the church are just as driven by clericalism if not more. I agree.

When I travel around the USA visiting parishes for missions or speaking at a conference I'll often come across the typical American suburban Catholic church built in the 70s and 80s—you know the sort of concrete monstrosity that looks like an giant ice cream cone that has fallen face down...

When I ask the people how this futuristic cross between a space ship and a parking garage came to be they will tell how “Fr Uptodate decreed that it would be like this. He designed it. He controlled the process down to every detail and the only part the people had to play was they had to pay for it.

Or they will tell how the Diocesan Liturgical Committee won’t let them build a traditionally styled church. It’s their money and their parish, but they can’t spend it building the kind of church they want.

The cruel irony of this Stalin-esque liberal clericalism is that the liberal bullies smiled sweetly and said this kind of architecture was “the church of the people”

Baloney.

The same kind of clericalist bullying took place not only in the realm of architecture, but also in theology, spiritual formation, catechesis, liturgy and every other aspect of church life.

I first experienced it in the Anglican Church, but I’m not surprised that it is rife in the Catholic Church too.

It was not only in parishes, but it was also present in seminaries, religious houses, Catholic colleges, chanceries and schools across the world. The modernist ideologues knew what was best for you and your job was to pray, pay and obey, but especially pay and obey.

While this is true, I’d like to add to Fr Z’s rant by pointing out another form of clericalism which is strangling the church today.

Remember “clericalism” comes from the word “cleric” or “clerk”. A priest was once called “a clerk in Holy Orders”. This is because when only the priests and monks were literate they held most of the office jobs.

So the form of clericalism strangling the church today is the clericalism of bureaucracy. Rather than serving the people of God the diocesan officials are the clerks (but not in Holy Orders) who quash spiritual initiatives with paperwork, forms, codes of

conduct, assessment plans, annual reports, financial compliance reports, regulations, regulations, regulations.

Try starting up a local faith initiative that needs diocesan approval. You will have the clericalism of the diocese all over you pointing out a hundred and one reasons why this won't work, your vision will fail and you will not get approval. You will have to go through insurance company procedures, financial projections, feasibility studies and more.

They will say, "This is to protect our children" or "this is to protect you."

Huh uh.

This is to protect the insurance companies. This is to protect the "assets" of the diocese. This is to protect the people at the top.

This clericalism too is deadly, and it is a particularly noxious form of clericalism because it is not obvious. Nobody is wearing a cassock and strutting about in a brocade fiddleback chasuble or processing in a cope and canopy.

Instead these clerics control and dominate with their smart suits, their high end salaries, their corporate lifestyle, their laptops, their conference calls and their long vacations

And all on the nickel you put in the collection plate.

This kind of clericalism makes the simple traditional priest who wears a cassock and cope and tries to serve his people look increasingly like the Cure d'Ars.